

There and Back Again



Ver. 1.0 – Ray Otus, 2018

Character Record

Name & Concept

Toughness
Starting Current

Fate
Starting Current

Traits & Skills

Introduction

You are an adventurer in the world of *The Hobbit*. Specifically, the world as it appeared in the 1937 edition of that book. Anyone can be a wizard with the right knowledge, trolls turn to stone in the sunlight, animals or magical objects can speak, elves aren't always nice, and the wild is full of terrible creatures like goblins, giant spiders, and even dragons!

Character Concept

To create a character, start with a 2-3 word *Concept* in keeping with the world of *The Hobbit*. Some "standard" concepts are: exiled dwarven miner, hobbit burglar, strange wizard, human ranger, wood elf. But you could also be an elf historian, hobbit sheriff, elven swordsmith, dwarven tunnel-fighter, human skin-changer, or any other thing you can dream up.

Toughness and Fate

Each character begins with 3 points of *Toughness* and 2 points of *Fate*. Divide 5 *more* points between the two.

Toughness is how many wounds you can take before being taken out of the action. Choose a high *Toughness* if you plan on being a rugged adventurer.

Fate, whether you think of it as luck, heart, or the will of the gods, is a resource you can call upon in a dire situation. Choose a high *Fate* if see your character as magical, either innately, through training, or having magical trinkets.



During your adventures you will lose *Toughness* from taking wounds (which can happen when you fail a roll) and spend *Fate* to get out of sticky situations or do magical things. If your *Toughness* falls to 0, you are Incapacitated until you can get healed or rest up. If you take wounds while Incapacitated, you die.

After a long rest in a safe place, a *Haven*, your *Toughness* and *Fate* return to their starting values. You may also regain points of *Toughness* and *Fate* when you *Take Courage!* You may never go above your starting F/T numbers, but you may increase these numbers through *Advancement*.

Traits and Skills

Choose two *Traits* (in bold) and three *Skills* (total) from the lists that follow each of your *Traits*. (See the example, below.)

Rhyming: singing, playing an instrument, reciting poetry, telling stories

Riddling: using logic, solving puzzles, outwitting someone, reading runes, and speaking languages

Fighting: hand-to-hand martial combat, brawling, feats of strength

Foraging: surviving (in the wild), healing, herbalism, tracking, shooting (incl. using thrown weapons), guiding, scouting

Sneaking: dodging, escaping bonds, hiding, concealing something, moving quietly

Crafting: forging, repairing, building, appraising

Carousing: drinking, cooking & eating, charming, haggling

Magic: crafting/lighting pyrotechnics, taking an animal form, scrying, healing with magic, animal kinship, etc. (You may create another one with the GM.)

Magic always requires 1 Fate to use, aside from any spent on bonus dice. Also, you can't do Magic without using the Magic Trait.

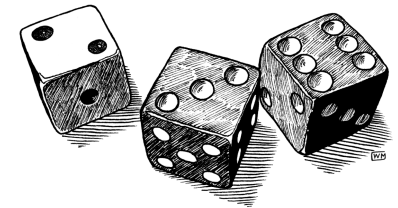
Sample Character

Forzo, Hobbit Sheriff

Toughness 6 / Fate 4

Carousing: drinking

Foraging: scouting, shooting



Rolling Dice

When you try something risky or complicated, or whenever the GM tells you to, grab 2d6. Before rolling...

- **Magic?** Spend 1 Fate point if you are using a Magic trait.
- **Advantage?** If you have a significant advantage, grab another d6. If you have a significant **Disadvantage**, drop a d6. *Having a skill is an advantage. Not having a trait is a disadvantage.* The GM determines which traits/skills are relevant and is the final arbiter on all advantages or disadvantages ... but you can make your case.
- **Roll and Count Successes.** You never roll more than 3d6 or less than 1d6. A 5 or 6 on any die = success. Otherwise you fail and may take a wound.
- **Spend Fate** to add 1 extra die per 1 point spent. You can go above 3d6 this way!
- **If you rolled all 1s**, it's a Blunder. Something really bad happens; the GM says what. (Note that you *may* spend Fate to try and roll your way out of a Blunder.)

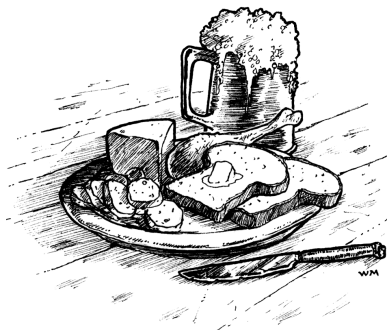
All rolls are made by players. The GM describes situations and asks players what they do or presents an immediate threat and forces the characters to react.

Take Courage!

Courage can be found in many places. If you sing a song, recite a verse, or tell a story of heroes of yore in a dark and dangerous place, roll Rhyming. On a success each player chooses to get 1 Fate point or 2 Toughness back. (The GM may offer other choices.) The best subjects for rhyming are natural wonders, bountiful feasts, humorous anecdotes, and tragic tales of lost love or great sacrifices.

Havens & The Wild

In your adventures you will move from places of quiet and rest into terrible dangers (and back again). These safe spaces are called Havens, where mostly civilized folk dwell and the worst perils are kept beyond guarded borders. Beyond lies the Wild. The places in the land that have never been tamed or have been reclaimed by the chaotic and evil forces. You must be in a Haven to fully heal (re-set) your Toughness, recover your Fate, or grow your character through Advancement.



Companions

Friends, retainers, or other extra characters may join your party. They have 1-3 different skills and may be controlled by anyone in the group. If a Companion undertakes a task on their own at which they are skilled, they always get 1 die – no advantage or disadvantage applies. If they try something without a skill, the GM decides if they are successful or not.

Resources

You begin with a d6 set to 2 for party Resources. To make a big purchase, roll \leq Resources. You won't roll Resources for routine purchases, only when you kit a party out for a big adventure or try to buy something really expensive or rare, for instance. Also, the GM may raise or lower your Resources die as appropriate if you are robbed, spend a big sum, find treasure, etc.

Advancement

Characters get 1 XP each time they add to the lore of the world with rhyming, secure a treasure, or encounter something dangerous in the wild and overcome or avoid it. Players can spend 5 XP while in a Haven to permanently get +1 max Toughness, +1 Fate point, a new Trait, or a Skill from a Trait area they already have.

For the Game Master

Play the world and everything in it. When a character tries something dangerous or difficult, call for a roll. Don't roll for easy; it just happens. Don't roll for impossible; it doesn't. (Note that an easy Magic action still costs 1 Fate, even if no roll is required.)

After the roll, the fiction always moves forward! Don't allow second attempts at the same action unless something in the situation changes.

Failure

On a failed die roll make things worse. Occasionally consider "failing forward:" allowing success with a serious cost or drawback. On a fail you can also cause a wound (-1 Toughness). Really big monsters, deadly traps, severe falls, etc. may cause 2 or 3 wounds.

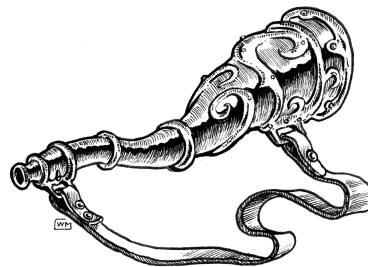
Always push hard on a Blunder! Cause collateral damage, pin them down, burn up a resource, have their Magic backlash or a magic item act up.

Dangers

The world is full of dangerous places, creatures, and people.

When you add an important danger, consider making a list of the things it will do if the characters don't intervene. When a character fails at something important or things stall out, you can mark one off to make the world feel more perilous. Be sure to show signs that something bad happened in the world, even if it was far away or hidden.

Also give dangerous creatures and people Toughness (to see how many hits they can take) and Fate points (to do magical things). List out their powers ahead of time and think about how they will look when used.



Magic Items

Magic items may be merely Wondrous, or they could be Relics.

Wondrous items often carry names and have subtle, passive effects (e.g. glow near evil creatures). Relics confer a Magic skill, like invisibility, but characters must spend 1 Fate to use/activate them.

Any magic item can be lost, broken, discharged, or tainted of course. And some have a will of their own!

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Sample Dangers

Warg-Riders of the Bloody Fang

T1 (per goblin), T1 (per warg)

- [] Picks up a character's scent
- [] Gathers the wargs
- [] Attack in a dark/unexpected place

Black Tilly, Queen of the Mirkwood Web

T5 (huge spider), F1 (trap-hiding illusion)

Poisonous: causes 2 wounds at a time

- [] Build traps all around the elf hall
- [] Bait the trap with a prisoner
- [] Trap/kill as many elves as possible
- [] Reclaim the forest road

Barrow Wight

T4, F3

Magic: Shrug off non-magical damage, Sing them to sleep, Freeze them with fear

The Wailing Quagmire

- [] Send forth a reeking fog
- [] Cause sickness and mutation
- [] Disgorge an ancient evil

